

COUNTY REPORT

State Blamed for High Cost of County Budget

By BURTON W. CHACE
County Supervisor

Adoption of a budget which could require a substantial increase in the property tax is a difficult job for a county supervisor.

But supervisors had little choice this year, since most of the increases were caused by services which the county must provide but over which the supervisors have little—if any—control. These primarily include criminal and welfare case loads.

Some 93 per cent of the county's \$1.38 billion budget goes for services which are mandated by state law or county charter. For example, the county must, by law, provide for welfare, sheriff's protection, legal and judicial proceedings, and many other social services.

QUITE HONESTLY, I stand on the fact that this budget is the lowest on which this, the nation's largest county, can operate if it must provide the state-mandated services—and it must. There was some fat in the budget which was trimmed out, and there are other items included which I voted against, but I believe it is a sound budget under the circumstances.

To begin with, the county is directed by the state to pay \$511 million for welfare costs. This is one-third of our budget which we cannot touch by law.

Next, another third of the budget goes for salaries which must be the prevailing wage by order of the county charter.

Employees were added only in critical areas, such as law enforcement where the Sheriff's Department was allocated 300 more men.

OF THE REMAINING one-third of the budget, capital projects were a key item, and supervisors only authorized those critically needed. Many of these had been removed from previous years' budgets for economy reasons, but it is at the point where delaying them any longer would be false economy.

Construction costs are rising about 5 per cent each year, and on some projects such as health centers, the county loses many dollars from state and federal sources when it does not proceed with a plan.

Naturally all these facts do not lessen the sting when I pay my property tax bill, but I believe the best possible job has been done on the 1968-69 budget.

The real jolt to the property taxpayer, however, is caused not by the size of the budget but by the means of financing county operations. Unlike a city or the state, the county is not free to enact a

wide range of taxes to balance the budget.

SUPERVISORS must turn to the property tax base for financing, and this is not an easy thing to have to do. We know property taxpayers are overburdened and to add to their load is difficult.

Our only hope at this time is that some significant legislation is enacted in Sacramento before June 30 to aid the property taxpayer. One bill, for example, would have the net effect of a 14-cent property tax drop—including the 1968-69 budget increases—if approved.

This is a measure which would continue a present half-cent state sales tax which expires June 30 and divert it to the counties. Your sales tax would remain the same, but the revenues would be earmarked for property tax relief.

COUNTIES have no power to levy a sales tax.

With the county's welfare obligation, as set down by the state, rising by 70 million, it seems only fair that the state be called upon to broaden the county's tax base.

Without state assistance, there appears to be no relief in sight for the property taxpayer. The county budget has tripled in size during the past decade and shows no signs of letting up so long as the welfare burden and other state programs are forced upon the county without accompanying programs to broaden the tax base.

EVERY PAYDAY



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National Recreation Awards to Be Given

The Southern California Edison Co. and Hans Stierle, manager of the Art Advertising Department of Leonard's Department Stores, have been named to receive intrnational awards for their voluntary efforts in behalf of community park and recreation programs.

Nominations for the awards were made by the Torrance Recreation Department for their voluntary contributions in Torrance. The annual awards dinner will be held at Sam's Cafe tonight beginning at 8 o'clock. National Recreation and Park citations will be presented during the program.

The awards are given annually by the Board of Trustees of the National Recreation and Park Association to selected individuals and citizen groups throughout the United States and Canada, who, in the opinion of the board, have made significant voluntary contributions to the park and recreation movement in their home communities.

Stierle will receive the award for his work in organizing and promoting the youth soccer program and in the growth of the American Youth Soccer Organization in the Torrance area. He has been instrumental in the development of the program as a coach and clinic sponsor since 1964.

The Southern California Edison Co. will be cited for its interest in community recreation as demonstrated by its leasing of more than 22 acres of land to the city for use as a baseball center.

The awards dinner will be chaired by Bernard Dougan, chairman of the Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission.

Defense Sirens To Blare Friday

Civil Defense sirens in Los Angeles County will be sounded in the customary month-end test of the various warning systems Friday, June 28, at 10 a.m., Sheriff Peter J. Pitchess announced.

The sirens would be heard for from three to five minutes in the event of an actual enemy attack, Pitchess added.

Criminal Justice Job Openings Now Available

Several openings are still available for men and women between the ages of 17 and 30 interested in job opportunities in the criminal justice fields to attend a free five-week program at California State College at Long Beach.

Minority group members are especially encouraged to apply and will be given preference.

Purpose of the program which begins July 1 and ends Aug. 2 is to introduce the participants to interesting and challenging police and correctional work. Hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A person must possess a high school diploma or be within one year of graduation. Those with minor juvenile offense background or with a minor misdemeanor conviction record are eligible.

Sponsored by the Federal Government through the Higher Education Act of 1965 and Cal-State Long Beach, the program will consist of classroom lectures by persons in various law enforcement fields and a series of field trips to police and correctional agencies. Trainees will not receive grades and will not be assured of jobs upon completion of the program but they will be given job counseling and guidance and a special certificate.

Careers in law enforcement include police, correctional, probation and parole officers,

deputy sheriffs and prison counselors. Hundreds of law enforcement jobs, many paying more than \$600 a month, are available in the Southern California area.

Interested persons are encouraged to write Dr. Howard Fradkin, Criminology Department, California State College at Long Beach, Long Beach 90801, or call 433-0951, extension 236.

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Population Placed at 133,095

Torrance's population reached 133,095 on April 1, according to the quarterly report just issued by the Regional Planning Commission. The city continues to rank as the county's fourth largest—behind Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Glendale.

Since the 1960 federal census, population in the city has increased by more than 32,000, the report noted.

The number of dwelling units in the city has increased from some 28,600 in 1960 to more than 43,000, the commission report said.

TOTAL population of the county as of April 1 was estimated at 7,102,897. The city of Los Angeles has an estimated population of 2,829,828, while the population of Long Beach was placed at 380,964.

Glendale, the county's third largest city, has a population of 137,347, according to the commission report.

THE COUNTY'S newest city, Carson—incorporated Feb. 20, has an estimated population of 90,104 and ranks 18th among the county's 77 cities, the commission reported. A total of 116,636 dwelling units located in the city of Carson, it was reported.

Estimated population for other area cities is: Gardena, 44,546; Hawthorne, 49,221; Hermosa Beach, 18,223; Lawndale, 26,273; Lomita, 20,290

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